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The 4 objectives of this study were (1) to conduct a normative study of values held by US college students, (2) to assess a wide range of value commitments of US college students as measured by an instrument validated by previous research, (3) to study the relationship between values and other relevant variables, and (4) to lay the basis for a continuing study of values. The study instrument was the Polyphasic Values Inventory, which assess value commitments using 20 multiple-choice items with the responses organized on a conservative-liberal continuum. The items cover selected philosophical, political, economic, social, educational personal-moral, and religious areas of value difference. Some of the study's 20 findings on student values are that students strongly support right-to-work laws, have a moderate viewpoint toward foreign policy, and feel that the US school curriculum is adequate, but that there is more need for practical application of the principles learned. They firmly believe in a personal God or a God common to all religions, but disagree among themselves about the nature of the Bible. They also feel that all men are entitled to equal opportunity to develop their capacities, and that a maximum of personal contact is necessary to overcome racial problems. Findings on some patterns of relationship between responses from students at similar institutions are also reported. (WM)

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AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENT VALUES: A NORMATIVE STUDY

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PURPOSE:

The interest which the populace at large and professionals in the behavioral sciences have in the value commitments of American college students is evident on every hand, both in the popular press and the technical literature. Much of what is written is based on intuition or limited observation, at best. Much of the research being done by capable behavioral scientists is restricted in scope both by the nature of the assessment and the nature of the population being studied. Of the currently available studies of college student values, many lack one or more of the following desired characteristics: (1) the study should be generalizable to the American student populace as a whole; (2) it should garner information about a wide range of value commitments; (3) it should examine the relationships between values and other relevant variables and (4) it should lend itself to replication for purposes of studying value shift through time. The intent of this study was to approach the achievement of these four characteristics.

This research project had the following objectives:

1. To conduct a normative study of values held by American college students.
2. To assess a wide range of value commitments of American college students as measured by an instrument validated by previous research.
3. To study the relationship between values and other relevant variables, such as:
   a) Geographic location, type of institution, and size of the institution.
   b) Age of student.
   c) Sex of student.
   d) Grade level of student.
   e) College major of student.
   f) Political preference of student.
   g) Religious preference of student.
   h) Philosophic preference of student.
   i) Financial background of student.
4. To lay the foundation for a continuing study of values--the study of value shift through time.

PROBLEM:

This paper is one part of a preliminary report of a nationwide survey in which the investigators sought to approach these four goals. The phase of this report was undertaken to collect data on the distribution of certain values and to establish student norms for these values of American college students. This report also examined the relationships between values and the size, affiliation and geographic location of the participating institutions.

INSTRUMENT:

The instrument used in this study was the Polyphasic Values Inventory which assesses value commitments using twenty multiple-choice items with the responses organized on a conservative-liberal continuum. The items cover selected philosophical, political, economic, educational, social, personal-moral, and religious areas of value difference.

The approach is straightforward; there is no attempt to tap unconscious values· the responses are intended to have as much meaning for the respondent as for the researcher. While the multiple-choice format lends itself to objective analysis of the responses, it does, however, restrict the respondent to the selection of one of the available responses. It was realized that the response chosen may not precisely represent the position of the respondent; nonetheless the instrument has proven very useful in describing the ways in which different groups of people differ in their selections when confronted with a given set of value alternatives.

Each of the questions is treated as a separate piece of information and no total score is awarded the respondent who remains anonymous. The instrument is intended primarily for use with college students, and the average college student can complete his responses in less than thrity minutes.

SAMPLE:

Figures published by the United States Office of Education were used to complete an analysis of the distribution of American college students by geographic location, affiliation, and size of the institution attended. On the basis of this analysis, representative institutions were selected for participation in the research.

A student directory was obtained from the research bureau, student personnel office, publications office, or college bookstore for each of the participating institutions, and a random sample (50% male and 50% female) was selected from each directory. Size of the sample selected was determined by the distribution analysis cited earlier. A total of 4,005 inventories (68.3% of those sent out) were returned. The distribution of the participating students closely approximates that all American college and university students with respect to geographical location, affiliation, and size of institution attended.

The inventories were mailed in three groups. The first mailing was during the week of November 27, 1967. Included in this group was the University of Hawaii, the University of Illinois, Pennsylvania State University, Wheaton College and Cornell University. The percentage returns for this group of schools was the highest of the three. The second mailing, during the week of January 2 1968 included Aquinas College, Baylor University, Nebraska Weslyan University, Reed College, the University of North Dakota, the University of Mississippi, and Southwestern State College. The mailing for the remaining institutions was during the week of February 5, 1968. (See Table 1.)

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

Each of the 20 items on the Polyphasic Values Inventory yielded significant differences among the various institutions. Of the 1,020 goodness-of-fit tests made between various groups of students within each institution to their respective norms, 442 had significant differences at the 0.01 level. These findings suggest that each of the Polyphasic Values Inventory items is a meaningful dimension for the study of differences in the values of students attending various types of American colleges and universities. Also, the large number of significant chi-squares found suggests that there are many differences in the values of the American college students studied.

The following general findings concerning the values of American college students can be crystallized from the research described in this paper:

1. In general, American college students take an objective view of science.
2. Students tended to feel that the right to vote should be given to all adult citizens who have a basic understanding of the rights and duties of citizenship.
3. American students appear to be heterogeneous in their attributes and duties of citizenship.
4. With but a few exceptions, American college students seem to accept our country's involvement in war when any free nation requests our assistance to fight aggression.
5. Students have a moderate viewpoint toward foreign policy. There is a tendency to take the position that the national interest should be subservient to the good of mankind.
6. It is strongly felt by college students that private enterprise be encouraged and that governmental regulation was only needed to insure a stable economy and the economic welfare of each citizen.
7. American college students overwhelmingly support right-to-work laws.
8. There was a tendency for students to feel that teachers should guide rather than direct the experiences of the child in the classroom to encourage good citizenship.
9. A majority of students felt that the subject matter content in our schools is adequate, but that there is more need for practical applications on the principles learned.
10. Although students felt that academic freedom is important, they believed that professors should be required to exercise some restraint in expressing their opinions.
11. American college students are very homogeneous in their belief about the equality of men. They strongly felt that all men are entitled to equal opportunity to develop their capacities.
12. Students as a whole express a belief that a maximum of personal contact is necessary to overcome racial problems. However, they are divided on whether intermarriage is a desirable solution.
13. There is a strong tendency for American college students to feel a need for a dual program of reform and punishment for criminals; however, they are about equally divided on whether the death penalty should be retained or discarded.
14. There was considerable disagreement among respondents concerning what they regard as the final authority in matters of ethical conduct.
15. Students participating in the study have strong feelings toward a moral obligation to refrain from cheating on tests; however, there is a disagreement about one's responsibility to discourage other students from cheating too.
16. American college students do not show any particular attitude toward what they consider appropriate sexual behavior. Students differ considerably in their beliefs.
17. Students as a group believe that the use of alcoholic beverages is up to the individual; however, they do feel that excessive drinking is undesirable.

18. American college students firmly believe in a personal God, or a God common to all religions.
19. There was considerable disagreement among students concerning the nature of the Bible.
20. Students did not arrive at any common belief as to what extent man is responsible for his deeds.

The data revealed some patterns of relationship in Polyphasic Values Inventory responses when the students were grouped into institutions of similar size, affiliation, and geographic location. That is to say, certain groups of students tended to respond similarly to the inventory items.

In regard to the statement above, the following general findings were observed:

1. There was a tendency for large schools to choose more liberal responses than their respective norms. Although many significant differences were found in comparisons with norms for the medium and small schools, no consistent pattern was found. Small schools were either private or religious and any patterns of relationship are best explained by those categories.
2. Public schools as a group had the smallest proportion of significant differences. No patterns of relationship were established. Private white schools revealed the strongest liberal pattern of responses. Thirty-five out of a possible forty were attributed to this group. The other private school (Tuskegee) also revealed many liberal attitudes; however, on the educational issues and two moral issues a more conservative attitude was found.
3. Catholic schools took conservative positions on the moral issues. The protestant schools also showed strong conservative patterns and two schools (Baylor and Wheaton) had significant differences on most of the items.
4. Comparisons in the Western schools revealed a liberal pattern of responses except for Colorado State College. Contrary to the Western schools, the Southern white schools had patterns of relationship which tended to be more conservative than the norms. Tuskegee took a moderate or liberal position on several items, primarily those related to voting, education, sex relations, and alcohol. Eastern non-Catholic schools were liberal on the moral issues while Boston College took a conservative viewpoint. No patterns of relationship existed in the Central States.
5. Worth mentioning are several schools that had consistent differences to the twenty norms. These were Reed College (liberal--nineteen differences), Wheaton (conservative--eighteen differences), and Mississippi (conservative--seventeen differences.) Three public schools gave the fewest significant differences, North Dakota with one, Wisconsin State with two, and Colorado State College with three.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS

Institution	Number Sent Out	Number Returned	Per Cent Returned	Per Cent of Total Sample
Aquinas	298	154	51.68	3.85
Baylor	295	188	63.73	4.69
Boston	385	273	70.91	6.82
C. S. C.	400*	300*	*	7.49
Cornell	498	346	69.48	8.64
Hawaii	298	222	74.50	5.54
Illinois	498	368	73.90	9.19
Mississippi	495	278	56.16	6.94
Neb. Wesleyan	196	160	81.63	4.00
North Dakota	287	199	69.34	4.97
Penn. State	496	393	79.23	9.81
Reed College	192	123	64.06	3.07
S. W. S. C.	292	170	58.22	4.24
Tuskegee	271	165	60.89	4.12
U. C. L. A.	480	295	61.46	7.37
Wheaton	200	171	85.50	4.27
Wisc. State	282	200	70.92	4.99
TOTAL	5863	4005	68.31	100.00

* The 400 recorded here is a hypothetical value as the C. S. C. sample of 300 is a stratified random sample from a much larger sample used in earlier research.